

Remarks Following a Meeting With United States Special Envoy to Sudan
Richard S. Williamson
January 17, 2008

The President. I've just had an extensive visit with Madam Secretary and members of my national security team, Rich Williamson, who is the Presidential Envoy—Special Envoy to Sudan.

We talked about our common commitment and the commitment of this Government to help the suffering of citizens in Sudan who, you know, suffers deprivation, rape. My administration called this a genocide. Once you label it genocide, you obviously have to do something about it.

Our discussion centered upon our mutual desire to develop a strategy that will help the United Nations become more effective. The United Nations is—considers the Darfur issue a central issue, and it's on its agenda. And we agree. The United States can help what has been a process, frankly, that has unfolded a little too slow for our liking. And we can help.

And secondly, we want to make sure that the peace agreement negotiated through this administration by Ambassador Danforth, between the north and south, holds. So Rich is going to report back to me quickly with, you know, a plan to accelerate our efforts.

You know, America is probably wondering why, why do you care? And one reason we care about the suffering in Sudan is because we care about the human condition all across the face of the Earth. And we fully understand that when people suffer, it is in our interest to help. And we also understand that when people suffer, it makes it more likely that some may turn to the ideology of those who use murder as a weapon. So it's in our national security interest and it's in our—in the interest of our conscience to confront this, what we have called a genocide. And I want to thank you for taking this on.

Ambassador Williamson. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. It's a big deal; you've got my full support.

Ambassador Williamson. I appreciate it. Thank you, sir.

The President. Yes, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:56 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John C. Danforth, in his capacity as former U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a
Request for Additional Funds for Veterans Resources
January 17, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker:

My Administration is committed to providing the resources needed to ensure that veterans, including those returning from current combat operations, receive the quality care and services they deserve.

In the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Public Law 110-161, \$3,691,391,000 was designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement contingent upon a formal budget request by me that includes designation of the entire amount as an emergency requirement.